

Sure enough there was a trail, and we tried to follow it, but we soon lost it again, and tramped on all day at haphazard, trying to steer by the sun.

Towards evening we halted to eat, and then pushed on again hot foot ; for that was the last of our provisions.

Just as the moon rose we came upon a gully with a bridge across it ; and there we all stopped dead, and looked at each other—a look I shall never forget. *It was the same bridge that we had crossed twelve hours before !*

That minute's one of the things I never like to think of. There we were, lost in a tropical forest, our guide gone, every man of us as weak as a child, and not a morsel of food left !

"Well, boys," says old Seth (who was our mainstay throughout), "we're in a kind o' fix, thar ain't no denyin' it. Naow, I calc'late this bridge ain't bin long built by the look of it ; and so, instead o' goin' losin' ourselves outer everybody's way, I guess we'll jest stick here till some party picks us up—it won't be long, I reckon. That's my idee ; how does it strike yew ?"

We all agreed at once ; and, indeed, we were too far gone now for any more marching. So we sat down there for three days, bearing it as well as we could, and trying to shoot game between whiles. But our eyes were too dim, and our hands too shaky, for that ; and the birds and monkeys scurried past, chattering and screaming as if in mockery. And at last we couldn't keep it off any longer, and it came.

The Spaniards died first, and no wonder, poor fellows ! for though some of them are as brave men as ever stepped, they haven't the pith and fibre of an

Englishman. The Portigee held out longer, for he had the heart of a lion ; but at last he went too, and old Seth and I were left alone.

"Seth," says I, "let's bury these poor fellows while we can ; for if they're left lying here, and our hunger gets worse, we might be driven to—you know !"

So we wrapped the poor fellows in their blankets, with a heavy stone in each, and rolled them over the edge of the ravine down into the water. We buried the gold too, and marked the spot, in case anything should turn up to save us at the last ; and then we lay down again, as if we had nothing left to do but to die.

And after that everything seems blurred and hazy, like an ugly dream. The trees, and the rocks, and the sky seemed to go round and round in a whirl ; and old Seth stood up as tall as a steeple, and great black things came out of the bushes and made faces at me ; and then I was sitting under the old tree in the churchyard at home, and heard my old mother's voice (who's been dead this five-and-twenty years) as plain as print ; till all at once there were men's faces and men's voices all round us, and I felt somebody lifting my head, and pouring something into my mouth, and then I fainted right off.

We had been picked up by a party coming back from the mines, and they carried us down with them to Arica ; and when we got round again, we went back and dug up the gold, and gave a lumping lot of it to the wives and children of the poor fellows that had died for us.

But when I got back after that last week's work, my hair was quite grey—as grey as you see it now. And that's all the story.

DAVID KER.

HOW WE GOT FRANK OFF TO SEA.

I.—FIRST STEPS.



"Do you remember Mrs. Sandforth, Jack?" I said to my husband one evening, as we were sitting round the fire, in that delightful hour when, the children having gone to bed, all is quiet, and "silence like a poultice comes to heal the blows of sound."

"Oh, yes!" said Jack, "what of her?"

"She has been here to-day, and she is in very great trouble. That eldest boy of hers has set his heart on going to sea."

"What, Frank, the fine sharp little fellow?"

"Yes. Is it not a pity?"

"I don't know that it is," said Jack, after thinking a

moment ; "he is just the lad to make a sailor, and if he has got the idea into his head, there is no use in his mother's trying to persuade him to settle down to anything else ; I have noticed that many a time. The only way to cure a lad of wanting to go to sea, when once he has set his mind on doing so, is to let him go ; and that does cure him very effectually—sometimes when it is too late to retrace his steps."

"Yes—but his mother, Jack? Frank ought to stay at home and help her. He is the eldest, you know, and it is very hard for her, now that her husband has been taken from her, to lose her son too, for I suppose it is as good as losing him?"

"I don't know that," said Jack ; "very likely she won't regret it if she yields to his wish and sends him ; but she will not find it an easy task to place him well."

"She is going to try and get him into the Merchant Service, and she came to-day to ask me if I would get you to tell her how she should set about it."

"I!" said Jack, "what do I know about it? It is out of my line altogether."

"Oh! but you can find out. Mrs. Sandforth says you have helped her so many times that——"

"That I am to help her again, I suppose? But

how? that is the question. I know," continued he, after thinking a moment: "Jackson's the man."

"Of course he is. I had quite forgotten him. Suppose we ask Mr. Jackson and the widow and her son to come here and have a cup of tea together on Thursday, and then they can talk it well over."

Mr. Jackson agreed to come. The widow was delighted, and as to Frank, when I saw the flush which rose to his face when I gave the invitation to his mother, I felt sure my husband was right, and that he would never settle to anything else.

Mr. Jackson was a hale, hearty old gentleman, who had himself spent many years in the "profession," as he always termed it, and whose three sons had, one after the other, taken to the same life. This had been no trouble to him, for he considered a seafaring life to be more ennobling, more honourable, and more advantageous than any other; and when he heard of a lad wanting to embrace it, he instantly felt a respect for him, and an interest in him, which he was glad to find a practical expression for.

"Well, young gentleman, so you want to climb the mast?" he said to Frank, after the tea equipage had been removed, and we were ready for the business of the evening.

"I want to be a sailor, sir," said Frank.

"I hope you don't think that, to be a sailor, you have nothing to do but to wear a cap with a gold band round it, and gilt buttons on your coat, and walk about carrying idle hands before you? There is plenty of hard work, dirty and disagreeable work too, which must be done before you can get the sound practical knowledge which you require—and it will be far the best that you should make up your mind to that before you begin. Many a lad has thought he would like to go to sea, who, when once he was there, far away from home and friends—with nothing to be seen beyond the ship but sea and sky—with the wind moaning in his ears—with rough sailors round him, and the remembrance in his heart of the dear ones he has left—would give a great deal to be back again."

"Oh!" said Frank eagerly, "I don't care about the work—I should like it."

"Well, excuse me, but I don't think you would. You may go through it and do it conscientiously and well, but as to liking it, that is quite another question.—You are not thinking of sending him as middy, ma'am, I hope?" turning suddenly to Mrs. Sandforth.

"Why not?" said that lady.

"Because I know by my own sons that it is better for lads to go out as apprentices. They have to work harder to begin with, but they get a more thorough training."

"But what will the expense be? Is any premium required?" said Mrs. Sandforth.

"Time was when no premium was required," said Mr. Jackson. "I apprenticed my two eldest boys without paying anything, and indeed they gained a few pounds during the four years they served. But things are different now."

"Yes, indeed," said Mrs. Sandforth. "I was talking

to a gentleman the other day, and he said whenever any situation was vacant, there was quite a crowd of applicants for it. It is a rather disheartening prospect for those of us who have a number of boys to start in the world."

"Not at all," said Mr. Jackson. "If they are all like the one I see before me, you need have no uneasiness. Energy, perseverance, honesty, and common sense will work their way anywhere, and nowhere better than on board ship.—But as to placing him. I don't think you can get with a good firm without putting down forty or fifty pounds."

"No," said my husband, suddenly breaking into the conversation; "I can tell you that. Knowing that we were to meet here to-night to discuss this question, I have taken a good deal of pains to get what information I could about it, and I can tell you that, so far from receiving boys without a premium, a good many houses will not have apprentices at all; and of those who do, many had no vacancies for some time to come."

"Then, how do they take them?"

"As midshipmen. Here is a letter I received in answer to my inquiries from a very well-known and most respectable house:—

"SIR,—We beg to inform you that midshipmen are received into Messrs. Blank's service, when there are vacancies, upon payment of a premium of £60 for a first voyage, and for each succeeding voyage the youth may make (the whole term not exceeding four years) the premium is £20; in addition to which, they have to contribute their share of the third officer's mess, £10 a voyage.

"Messrs. Blank desire it to be distinctly understood that they do not guarantee to continue a youth in their service as midshipman, nor at any time to give him promotion.

"Should these terms suit your views, we will, on receiving your reply, put the name and age of the young gentleman in our list of candidates for midshipmen's berths, and let you know when a vacancy occurs for him."

"You see, Mrs. Sandforth," said Jack, "if you send him as midshipman, you will have to pay seventy pounds down with him, find his outfit, then he will have to take his turn in the list, and his chance of future promotion."

"I don't approve of a boy like Frank going as a midshipman," said Mr. Jackson, rather impatiently; "and I have seen the working of it again and again. A boy, who intends to get on in his profession, is much better for gaining a thorough practical knowledge of the hard work of a seaman's life. If he has gone through it, he is afterwards better liked and more valued both by officers and men. The knowledge which will be of service to him in his after-career is only to be acquired by hard persevering work and close attention."

"Then what is the best thing to be done?" said Mrs. Sandforth.

"The best plan of all is to send him to a training-ship first," said Jack, breaking in again.

"A training-ship?"

"Yes. When I was inquiring about the thing, I was continually met by some question or remark about the *Worcester*. I was told again and again that the preference was always given to *Worcester* cadets. This led me to inquire about the *Worcester*, and I

found that it is a ship that has been placed at the disposal of a committee of shipowners and other gentlemen by the Admiralty, for the express purpose of educating respectable boys for sea."

"I know. I have heard about it," said Mr. Jackson, "and a very fine thing too."

"Where is it placed?" said Mrs. Sandforth.

"It is moored in the Thames, off Greenhithe, Kent, and it accommodates about one hundred and forty boys."

"Oh! only in the Thames," said Frank, in a disappointed tone. "I hoped we should go a very long voyage first thing."

"Don't you be impatient, young gentleman," said Mr. Jackson; "there is scarcely any profession you could join without going through some training, and this is almost more needed for a sailor than for any one else; and if your mother will only send you to the *Worcester*, you will there receive the best training possible."

"And when he leaves the *Worcester*?" said Mrs. Sandforth.

"If he leaves with credit to himself, and gets a certificate, he is not likely to find much difficulty in being apprenticed on good terms—or he may then become a midshipman. Most of the committee, and many large shipowners, give a decided preference to *Worcester* cadets."

"And what are the terms?"

"The terms of admission," said Jack, reading from a paper he had in his hand, "are forty-five guineas per annum, payable half-yearly in advance, and ten guineas per annum for uniform, medical attendance, washing, and use of school-books and stationery. The uniform consists of best blue jacket, waistcoat, trousers, cap and badge; also one pair second quality blue cloth trousers and cap, and three uniform serge shirts. Then there are a number of articles to be provided by the relatives of the boys, a list of which, together with ample information, forms of application, &c., I got readily enough from the Secretary, Thames Marine Officers' Training Ship. Office: 59, Fenchurch Street, London.—By the way," continued Jack, "I hope you paid attention to your lessons while you were at school, Frank. No boy will be taken who cannot read, write, and spell with tolerable accuracy, besides being able to work correctly sums in the simple rules of arithmetic, vulgar fractions, and decimals. Then there is another thing to remember: a boy cannot be admitted who is over fifteen. How old are you, Frank?"

"I am just twelve," said Frank.

"That is just the best age.—Well, Mrs. Sandforth, I should certainly advise you to adopt the plan. There are so many advantages connected with the *Worcester*. There is the training the boy gets. Then, if he passes through it creditably, at the end of two years he can obtain the *Worcester* Board of Trade Certificate, and is almost sure of obtaining employment. Besides that, the Lords of the Admiralty present annually ten commissions as midshipmen in the Royal Naval Reserve to the *Worcester* cadets."

"I should like to think about it a little longer," said Mrs. Sandforth, "but at present I feel decidedly inclined to send him."

"There is one question I want to ask if I may before you all go," said I. "How do boys manage whose parents cannot afford to pay for their admission on board such ships as the *Worcester*? There must be a great number of such who would be glad to go to sea."

"There are excellent training-ships on purpose for destitute boys; but those only are received whose friends are quite unable to fit them out at their own expense. They are taught for several months, and then are sent to serve either in the Royal Navy, or in the Merchant Service."

"And how do they obtain admission?" said Mrs. Sandforth.

"There is a Benevolent Society for the Equipment, Maintenance, and Instruction of Distressed Boys, for the Royal Navy and the Merchant Service," answered my husband. "It is named the Marine Society, and the offices are at 54½, Bishopsgate Street Within, London. Boys desirous of admission have to attend with one of their parents at the offices, between the hours of ten and twelve o'clock in the morning of any week-day except Thursday. Those who have lost both parents have to bring some proof of their decease, and, if possible, to be accompanied by a friend. No boy can be admitted who is less than fourteen, or more than sixteen years of age, nor any one who is under the stature of four feet ten inches, measured without shoes on. Prizes are given for good conduct, and berths are procured for the boys after they leave the ship."

"These ships are for boys who have committed some crime, are they not?" said Mrs. Sandforth.

"Oh, no! You are thinking of the *Cornwall* and *Arctusa* training-ships. This society's ship is the *Warspite*."

"Yes, I should think it is a noble movement," said I, "but still it does not quite apply to the boys whom I mean—boys whose parents are not destitute, but still not in a position to pay fifty pounds a year for them to go on a training-ship."

"Well, they have to get them apprenticed," said Mr. Jackson. "There are shipowners both in London and the large seaports who, if sufficient personal influence can be brought to bear upon them, will take apprentices either without premium or at reduced rates, but these are exceptions. I have known where boys have got to sea in this way, but the opportunities are much rarer than they ought to be."

"We have not said anything about the outfit," said Jack.

"And how much will that come to?" inquired the widow.

"That depends on what you get," said Mr. Jackson. "Of course you may have a complete outfit, costing a good deal of money, or you may get what is absolutely necessary and no more, and this, I think, may be done for about fifteen pounds. I fancy that at home I can lay my hands upon the list of things we got for

Charles when he first went to sea. If I can, I will send it on to you."

"Oh! you are so good," said Mrs. Sandforth. "I cannot tell you how grateful I am."

"Not at all, ma'am; not at all. The pleasure to me is as great as the benefit to you," said Mr. Jackson kindly; and after a little more conversation the party broke up, Mrs. Sandforth being much cheered by the encouraging words of her friends.

Mr. Jackson was as good as his word, and the next day the widow received the list,—which, for the benefit of any anxious mothers desiring similar information, I had better copy:—

List of Articles constituting the Outfit of Charles Jackson, Apprentice.

	£	s.	d.
Mattress and Pillow	0	8	0
Two Blankets (supplied from home)			
Counterpane	0	3	6
Three Pairs Canvas Trousers	0	13	6
Two Duck Frocks	0	7	0
Three Blue Serge Shirts ..	0	16	6
Six Stout Shirts (supplied from home)			
One Dress Suit	3	0	0
One Pair Duck Trousers ..	0	5	6
Three Pairs Drawers	0	9	9
Six Pocket-handkerchiefs ..	0	2	6
Three Guernsey Frocks ..	0	9	9
Oilskin Coat and Trousers ..	0	16	0
One Pair Cotton Braces ..	0	1	0
Six Pairs Worsted Hose ..	0	6	0
Twelve Huckaback Towels (supplied from home)			
Sou'-wester	0	2	6
Blue Cloth Cap	0	4	6
Foul Clothes Bag and Key ..	0	6	6
Three Pairs Shoes (supplied from home)			
One Scrubbing Brush	0	1	3
Zinc Basin, Goblet, and Cup	0	7	6
Two Clasp Knives	0	3	0
Three Pounds Yellow Soap ..	0	1	3
Three Pounds Marine Soap ..	0	2	6
Log Book	0	4	6
Sea Chest (name cut on) ..	1	5	0
Waist-belt	0	2	6
Housewife, 3s. 6d.; Hook Pot, 1s. 6d.; Can, 8d.	0	5	8
Writing Materials, Comb and Brush, Bible, and various small articles supplied from home.			

With the above list there was likewise sent a note to Mrs. Sandforth, from Mr. Jackson, which ran as follows:—

"DEAR MADAM,—I have pleasure in sending you the enclosed list of articles, which constituted the outfit of our eldest son, Charles. I may say that when we made it out money was not too plentiful with us, and that therefore it was by no means a luxurious outfit. Charlie said he

managed with tolerable comfort, but he could have done with more. He was apprenticed when he was sixteen, for four years. When his term of apprenticeship expired he obtained excellent certificates, both as to efficiency and character, from the captain and owners of the vessel in which he sailed. He passed *all* the examinations with great credit, and has been third mate, second mate, and first mate; now he is the captain of a vessel. He has been to India, China, Australia, New Zealand, and various other parts, and I can only say that I hope you will have reason to be as proud of your son as I am of mine.

"I am, Madam,

"Your obedient Servant,
"JOHN JACKSON."

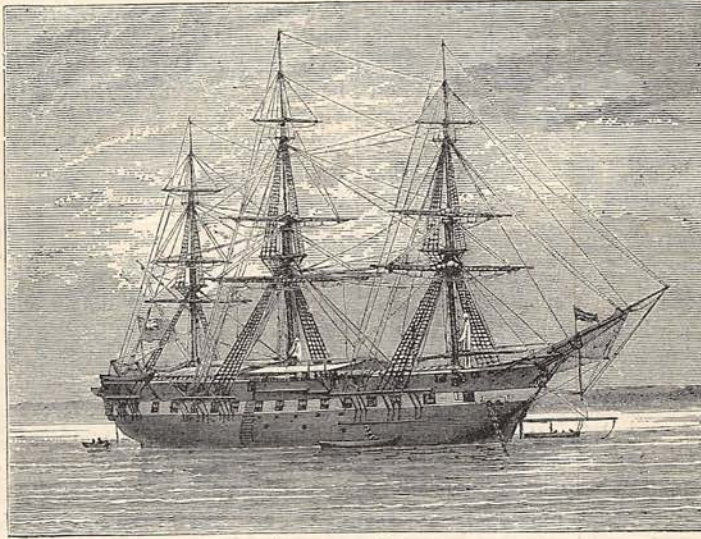
After due consideration, Mrs. Sandforth determined to send her son to the *Worcester*. She applied for admission, and found that she had to procure a testimonial from a friend as to his character and ability. This Jack readily gave her. She had to answer various questions, give a certificate of his birth, a medical certificate, and also a written promise that she would conform to the regulations of the committee, and remove him if required to do so.

All this was soon done, and in a short time Mrs. Sandforth had the satisfaction (a decided satisfaction too, notwithstanding the first qualms at parting) of seeing her son duly installed as a cadet on board the training-ship.

She called upon me several times afterwards, once with Frank himself, who had got a day's leave of absence; and from the boy, who was full of the subject, and evidently enthusiastic about everything that concerned the *Worcester*, I learnt particulars as to his

life on board the training-ship, and his prospects in the profession, some account of which I hope to be able to give in another chapter.

PHILLIS BROWNE.



THE "WORCESTER" TRAINING SHIP.



A "WORCESTER" NAVAL CADET.

to make assurance sure, M.S.Y.C. upon his shako, which his height compelled him to doff ere he entered the doorway.

"Where is Jabez Clegg?" faltered Ellen, as she pressed to her father's side, led him to his chair, and placed his cushions to his liking, Augusta bringing a buffet on which to rest his foot.

The stalwart young fellow's eyes followed the attentive daughter, as he answered—

"We have left Jabez Clegg at Mr. Mabbott's, Miss Chadwick," with an inclination of his head. "He was afraid you would be anxious for your father's safety, and I offered to see Mr. Chadwick home in his stead."

Ellen's black eyes expanded questioningly, and Mrs. Chadwick's mild voice, in accents indicative of some fear, asked—

"I hope not of necessity, sir?"

"Well, yes, madam: and I must hasten back; he has received a sabre-cut on—Eh, dear!"

Ben Travis, for he it was, darted forward to catch Ellen Chadwick, just as he had previously caught Jabez at Mabbott's gate; Aspinall's sabre had wounded two instead of one—Ellen Chadwick, who that day had seen what sabre-cuts meant, had fainted.

Ben Travis bore her to the sofa, Mr. Chadwick pulled the bell-rope, Augusta ran for water, Mrs. Chadwick called for vinegar and burnt feathers, and in the midst of the commotion Mr. Ashton burst into the room in a state of excitement very foreign to his nature, which was tolerably easy-going.

"Thank God! Augusta, you are here," he exclaimed. "Your mother is almost distracted about you—Why, what is the matter with Ellen? The whole world seems gone mad to-day—or hell has set its demons loose. I've just seen our friend Captain Hindley's horse take fright in Mosley Street at the firing, and dash with him against those half-built houses at the corner of Tib Street. He was pitched off amongst the bricks and scaffolding; and the horse dropped. Old Simon Clegg happened to be there, and he helped me and another to raise Hindley, who had fared better than his horse, for it was stone-dead, and he is only badly hurt."

He had gone on talking, though hardly any one had listened to him. Ellen's fainting fit engrossed feminine attention, and the yeoman, seeing her revive,

was saying to Mr. Chadwick, "You will excuse me now, sir. I must look after our poor friend Jabez."

"Eh! what! Jabez? You don't mean to say anything has happened to Jabez Clegg?" exclaimed Mr. Ashton, pausing in the act of drawing forth his snuff-box.

Travis was gone, but Mr. Chadwick, whose tongue now was none of the readiest, stammered out—

"Yes, William, w-we le-left him at Mab-ab-bott the confectioner's. In try-ying to-o save me he got b-badly w-wounded. I'm v-very s-sorry, for he is a n-noble y-young man."

"The wretches! I'd almost as soon they'd wounded me! Stay here, Augusta;" and with that, Mr. Ashton was off after Ben Travis. The main streets were unsafe, so he also took the back way, and across Spear Street to Mr. Mabbott's, with a celerity scarcely to have been expected, for he was not a young man. But his apprentice had won upon him not only by his integrity and business qualifications, but by his manifest interest in the family he served, especially the daughter. Let me not be misunderstood. Augusta was the cynosure of Mr. Ashton's eyes; the homage of the apprentice to the school-girl, he estimated as the homage of an apprentice merely, and was gratified thereby, but had no thought beyond.

He found Jabez on a chintz-covered couch in Mr. Mabbott's sitting-room, his arm bound tightly with a towel through which the blood would force its way.

He was pale and exhausted from excessive hæmorrhage, but seemed more concerned about the fate of the multitude outside than for his own.

Ben Travis, discovering that no one had dared to venture in quest of a doctor, threw himself across his horse, which he found where he had left it, and was off up Mosley Street, intent on bringing either Dr. Hull or Dr. Hardie.

His uniform was a protection, and so the doctors told him; Dr. Hardie plainly saying that black cloth was not plate-armour, and that his friend, whoever he might be, must wait until the tumult had somewhat subsided.

But Jabez was only a few hours without attention. There were hundreds wounded that day, who had to skulk into holes and corners to hide themselves and their agony as best they might, afraid of seeking surgical aid lest Nadin and his myrmidons should pounce upon them and haul them to prison as rebels.

END OF CHAPTER THE NINETEENTH.

HOW WE GOT FRANK OFF TO SEA.

II.—THE TRAINING-SHIP.



WELL, how do you find that Frank gets on at the training-ship?" said I to Mrs. Sandforth, when that lady came to see me one morning after the boy had been away from home about twelve months.

"Very well, indeed," she answered. "I came to-day on purpose to see you about him, for I wished to propose that we should make a visit to the *Worcester*, and look over it together.

I thought you would be interested both on Frank's account and also—"

"Ah! I know what is in your mind," said I. "You fancy that my Jacky is following Frank's example. I hope from my heart you are mistaken."

"Wednesday is the day on which the friends of the cadets usually visit them," said Mrs. Sandforth, "but Wednesday is a holiday; and as I know you would prefer going some day when the boys are at work, I

wrote to the captain, with whom I am acquainted, and he has given me permission to go there with my friends on Thursday next. Will that suit your convenience?"

"Perfectly," I answered, "and I think it will suit Jack also."

As this was found to be the case, Thursday was finally fixed upon, and on that day we visited the *Worcester*; and for the benefit of any mothers who have thought of sending their boys to sea, I shall give an account of what we saw and heard when there.



THE CAPTAIN OF THE "WORCESTER."

Thursday morning was exceedingly cold and stormy; and when we were on our way, I mentally congratulated myself that none of my boys were exposed to the elements, and undergoing the hardening process which was, I imagined, being experienced by the *Worcester* cadets. On reaching Greenhithe station, we went at once to the pier, passing on our way the *Chichester* and *Arethusa* training-ships, which are moored about half-a-mile above the *Worcester*. A boat rowed and steered by five or six of the young gentlemen, who evidently quite understood their business, quickly conveyed us to the ship. Everything was so quiet that no one would have imagined, on first stepping on board, that 145 boys were on the vessel; but on descending a few steps quite a different scene presented itself.

The main deck serves as school-room and dining-room for all, and as sleeping apartment for half of the cadets.

We arrived in the middle of school time. The classes were arranged round the deck—the English or junior classes on the right hand, the nautical classes on the left. I must say I never saw collected together a finer set of boys. They looked honest, healthy, straightforward, gentlemanly in their bearing, fearless, and bright. If the men prove what the boys looked to be, no one need fear very much that the future of England in their hands will be behind its past. They were all busily at work when we entered; but when we had been there about half-an-hour, there was a general uprising, and the busy hum of cheerful voices proclaimed that lessons were over; and shortly tea began. The tables were movable, and when not in use were fastened to the ceiling above the desks; and near them were large hooks, from which, in two or three hours,

the beds would be suspended. There is no unoccupied space on board a training-ship. In fine weather the upper deck is the playground, but on cold, raw days the boys remain below; and if not in the school-room, are to be found in the play-room or in the library. In the play-room they romp and jump about to their heart's content, or play at dominoes or chess; and in the library they can read any of the books which are on the shelves, and which consist of stories of adventure, and various pleasing and instructive works.

I think it would have been a comfort to the mothers of the boys if they could have felt how warm the ship was. It is heated all over with hot-water pipes.

In the lower deck there was a hammock for each boy, suspended from two strong rings in the ceiling, with a chest underneath it, marked with his name. These hammocks consist of a hair bed, a pillow, a couple of blankets, and a sheet; and we were told that, after sleeping in them, one did not take kindly to an ordinary bed.

Every part of the ship was beautifully clean, and the work was, in a great measure, done by the cadets. They straighten their hammocks, black their boots, scrub the decks, and the elder boys take the watch in their turn, both day and night. They rise at six in winter, and at half-past five in summer time. They have a cup of coffee, a biscuit, then wash, and study seamanship, under the commander, until eight. In summer this consists of reefing and furling the sails, a task the boys greatly enjoy. Prayers are read twice a day, and divine service is held on board twice every Sunday. There is a little room for sick boys, and a matron who looks after those who are ailing; but if anything at all serious is the matter with a boy, he is sent ashore. A doctor visits the ship every day.



CADET.

The instruction given includes the usual branches of a sound English education, French, mechanics, steam-engine, chart and freehand drawing. Over and above these the boys are taught practical seamanship, such as knotting, splicing, reefing, furling, heaving the lead, the management of boats, swimming, and nautical astronomy. They learn many things which it is not usual for regular apprentices to be taught, such as covering the masts with rigging, and heaving the lead.

The masts are generally rigged when a boy goes on board ship, and so he has no opportunity of learning how to do it; and as to heaving the lead, I was told of an instance lately in which it was necessary that this should be done on a vessel coming up the Thames, and only two persons on board knew how to set about it, and they both had been *Worcester* cadets.

There are several prizes offered annually as rewards for merit and progress. One of these—a gold medal—is given by the Queen, and is awarded to the boy who shows the qualities likely to make the finest sailor. These consist of cheerful submission to superiors, self-respect and independence of character, kindness and protection to the weak, readiness to forgive offence, desire to conciliate the differences of others, and, above all, fearless devotion to duty and unflinching truthfulness. Before giving the prize, the commander confers with the head master, and selects not less than three, or more than five, boys whom he considers to have the qualifications for which the prize is given. (I was told that the difficulty was to limit the list to the required number.) The commander then submits these names to the boys who have been assembled in the school for the purpose, and each boy who has been six months on board previously to the time of distribution, votes then and there for one of the five selected. The boy who receives the highest number of votes gains the prize. The advantage of this plan is that the boys are so much more likely than the masters to know which of their companions has displayed these high moral qualities.

“Do you find that the judgment of the boys confirms your own?” asked I of the captain.

“Generally it does,” he replied; “though I am afraid if there were two boys of equal merit, the biggest would get the vote.”

The captain told us with great pride of an incident which occurred only a few months before, in which a boy named Gordon had saved one of his companions from drowning. Three or four of the boys were playing on the pier, when somehow one of them fell into the river. Gordon immediately threw off his boots and coat, and jumped in after him. The terrified boy clung to him so closely as to endanger the lives of both, and they went down twice. When they came up the second time, Gordon gave his

companion a blow on the head to keep him away, and then held him up by the collar with one hand, whilst with the other he swam—not to the pier, for he had coolly looked round, and discovered that it was too far off—but to a boat which was further out in the river. For this gallant conduct he obtained a medal from the Royal Humane Society, and another from the committee of the *Worcester*. The boys on board the ship gave him a gold watch, and the captain and his wife a gold chain.

The majority of boys at present on board the *Worcester*, are the sons or friends of those who have been connected with the Merchant Service; though there are besides several who have had no connection with it. A Japanese prince was there for two years, and left some months ago. He was one of the cleverest boys on board, and could climb the masts like a cat. He served as lieutenant in the late Japanese expedition to Formosa.

Perceiving that we were rather tired with our walk round the vessel, the captain kindly invited us into his cabin, where we were regaled with a cup of tea, during the discussion of which my husband resumed the conversation, by asking the captain about the terms of apprenticeship, of which Mr. Jackson had spoken to us in the first instance.

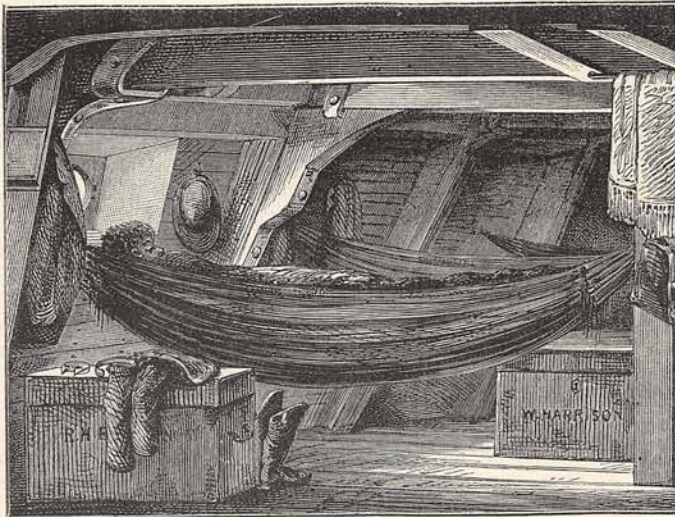
“What becomes of your boys when they leave your ship, captain?” he said; “for, after all, I consider the future of more importance than the present.”

“They are bound apprentice on board some vessel,” the captain replied. “If they receive their certificates—and it is quite unusual for a boy not to do so—they have no difficulty in obtaining a ship; indeed, ship-owners give a preference to our cadets. Many of those who have been apprenticed are now holding honourable positions in the Merchant Service. The Board of Trade allows two years passed on board the *Worcester* to count as one year’s sea-service; so that a cadet who has been here two years can pass an examination as second officer after three years’ service at sea.”

“And is any premium required before a boy can be apprenticed?” said Jack.

“Oh, yes,” replied the captain. “Different ship-owners have different terms. Some ask £150, others £30 or £40.”

“Do you think that the boys continue to like the profession?”



HAMMOCK ON BOARD THE "WORCESTER."

"Fairly," answered the captain. "The old cadets come to see us every now and then, and seem for the most part tolerably contented with sea-life. They evidently enjoy the remembrance of the time they spent here."

"Do I understand that your ship is devoted exclusively to the training of officers for the Merchant Service?" said Jack.

"Yes, quite so; and we intend shortly to substitute a larger vessel for this one, when we shall be able to take boys from the age of ten years instead of twelve."

"And is it the only ship devoted to this purpose?"

"There is another at Liverpool, where the terms are not quite so high. There are ships for training seamen not officers, such as the *Warspite*, the *Chichester*, and the *Arethusa*."

"And how did the idea of these training-ships originate?" asked Jack.

"It arose from the difficulty which was experienced in providing properly qualified officers for merchant vessels. This induced several gentlemen—shipowners and others—to try the experiment of educating respectable boys for the profession. There used to be an idea that boys intended for a seafaring life should be sent on board young, and allowed to rough it, and get their knowledge how they could; and the result was that there was quite a scarcity of properly-trained officers."

"Poor little fellows!" said I.

"Yes, indeed they were poor little fellows," said the captain. "My wife, who used to accompany me on my voyages, says that often her heart ached for the boys when they first came. Officers and seamen were all busy with the navigation of the vessel, getting her out to sea, and no one had any time to attend to the new hands, who had only a miserable time of it."

"And you think this institution is successful?" said Jack.

"I do not imagine that any one who has felt an interest in it, and watched its operation, can doubt that it is doing, and will do, a great work in connection with the Mercantile Marine. The training given is calculated not only to qualify the officers for the performance of their duties, but to make them true Christian gentlemen; and it is to be hoped and expected that their influence over the seamen will be such, that the tone of the entire service will be raised."

"Well," said Jack after we reached home, and were talking over our expedition with Mr. Jackson, who had dropped in, "I think these training-ships are noble institutions, nobly carried out. There is only one thing more I should like to see altered."

"And what is that?" asked Mr. Jackson.

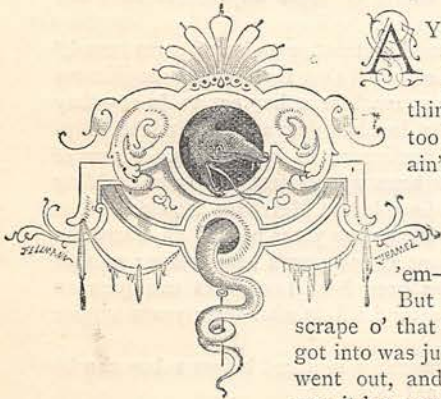
"The premiums," answered Jack. "After parents have had a boy two or three years at a training-ship, and paid fifty-five guineas a year with him, one would think he could be apprenticed without paying anything more, especially as after receiving this training he will be able to make himself useful at once."

"I quite agree with you," said Mr. Jackson; "and I have good hopes that this system will in time be improved upon. The majority of the shipowners are right-feeling men. It is they who have started the training-ships; and, seeing that the results have thus far proved so satisfactory, I cannot doubt but that they will shortly see it to their interest to go one step further, and by the reduction of premiums to a merely nominal sum, remove the greatest difficulty now remaining in the way of those who wish their sons to enter the Mercantile Marine."

We all heartily echoed Mr. Jackson's "hope," and I sincerely trust that by the time my Jacky is of age to join it may be in a great measure realised.

PHILLIS BROWNE.

AT CLOSE QUARTERS WITH A BOA CONSTRICTOR.



AYE, aye, sir—I've had a taste o' them things in my time too; and they ain't none so pleasant neither—not till you gets used to 'em—are they now? But the queerest scrape o' that sort as ever I got into was just arter we fust went out, and this was the way it happened.

D'reckly we got to Bombay we was packed off up country, part by rail and part on foot, till we got to our new quarters—a little bit of an outlyin' station on the Upper Ganges, with a crackjaw name as I can't recollect, and couldn't pronounce if I did. And a

sweet place it was, by jingo! all mud barrin' the trees, all trees barrin' the mud, and all mosquitoes together. Then, by way of makin' things nice and comf'able, we got there just in the height of the hot season; and as if that warn't enough, we'd just had new shoes sarved out to us, and mine was so jolly tight that I felt just like standin' on tiptoes in a tea-cup! Oh, didn't I just wish myself back in old England agin, nineteen times a day! But, d'y'e see, if a man wants to have everything cut out soft and smooth for him, he's no call to jine the sarvice at all; and if he does, his best game's just to grin and bear it. And so did we.

But there was one man among us as didn't seem to mind it a bit, and that was our commanding officer, Major the Hon. Edward M—, as maybe you've heard on. He got his step in the time o' the Sikh war, at Sobraon, where all the senior officers o' the regiment was bowled over all to once; but he didn't get nothin' more nor what he deserved, no, nor half as much neither. He was a man if ever there was one,